

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today in America we spend \$2.5 trillion or 17 percent of our economy as measured by the gross domestic product on health care. Yet we are 37th in terms of quality out of 192 countries. We are 41st in infant mortality out of 192 countries. We are dead last among industrialized countries in preventable deaths.

Health care premiums have doubled in the past 10 years. They will double again in the next 10 years. Fourteen thousand people lose their coverage every day. They are not older people, because they qualify for Medicare. They are not poor people, because they qualify for Medicaid. It is individuals who get up every day and go to work, but, because of the skyrocketing cost of health care, their employers are forced to cut coverage and, in some cases, close altogether.

This is a uniquely American problem with a uniquely American solution. We should support health care reform now.

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HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. MILLER of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, with almost 16 million people unemployed and looking for work, with an unemployment rate of over 10 percent, something we haven't seen in 26 years, with countless Americans asking, Where are the jobs, why is the Democratic leadership ramming through a health care bill that will not add one net job to the American economy?

In fact, the majority's bill will do the exact opposite. It will impose \$729 billion in new taxes, crushing small business. For those small businesses that manage to survive the new taxes, their employees will be required to have insurance or face yet another tax. Mr. Speaker, this has got to stop. Americans do not want higher taxes. Americans do not want higher premiums, and Americans do not want this massive government health care takeover bill.

ARE YOU LISTENING?

(Mr. BONNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers of this country want to know if the people who work for them, who were hired last November to serve here the people's House are really listening to what they've been saying.

Appropriately enough, this started back on tax day, April 15. Tens of thousands, perhaps millions, began to speak with one voice about the spending, the borrowing, the rising unemployment as well as the ever-expanding role of the Federal Government into our daily lives.

In August, even yesterday they turned out en masse, speaking as loud

as they could from the very steps of this grand old historic building, begging, pleading, please honor the freedoms and liberties that generations of Americans have fought and even died for. Republicans have heard that message, and we agree with you. We know you are right.

Mr. Speaker, your party is in control of this Congress, but the American people will have the final say. Are you listening?

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. WITTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with you comments from my constituents in the First Congressional District of Virginia about H.R. 3962:

Elizabeth from Williamsburg says, My business ends up with an 8 percent margin so an 8 percent of payroll contribution rate would be significant.

Esther from Williamsburg says, Keep our government small. Bigger isn't better.

Sandra from Seaford says, I want to choose my own health insurance.

Beverly from Woodford says, I am happy with my health care right now and do not want to see it changed. I do not want the government involved in my health care.

Diana from Yorktown says, Don't vote for a bill that would unfairly burden many generations to come.

Bruce from Warrenton says, The health care legislation now pending will surely break the bank of this country in addition to destroying the finest health care system in the world.

Connie from Dumfries says, I am concerned that some legislation in Congress will create a new government-run health plan that will cause me to lose my current employer coverage. I want to be sure that I can keep my current coverage, and I urge you to oppose any new government-run health insurance plan.

Chester from Williamsburg says, I object to the government taking control of my private health care decision.

PELOSI BILL WILL FUND ABORTIONS

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, health care reform should not be used as an opportunity to use Federal funds to pay for elective abortions. Health reform should be an opportunity to protect human life, not end it. House Speaker NANCY PELOSI is proposing a 2,032-page government takeover of health care that directs the new government-run plan to cover elective abortions. There is no getting around it. Under Speaker's PELOSI's government takeover of health care, Federal funds will be used to pay for abortions

under the government-run plan and to subsidize individual plans that include abortion.

As an alternative to Speaker PELOSI's bill, House Republicans are offering a commonsense, responsible solution that would reduce health care costs and expand access while protecting the dignity of all human life. The Republican plan would codify the Hyde amendment and prohibit all authorized and appropriated Federal funds from being used to pay for abortions.

Under the Republican plan, any health plan that includes abortion coverage may not receive Federal funds. As a doctor with more than 30 years' experience, I will be voting "no" on the Pelosi health care bill that will destroy life instead of protect it.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Republican health care bill. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates the Republican alternative will decrease health insurance premiums up to 10 percent. Compare that to Speaker PELOSI's government-controlled health insurance plan, which CBO estimates will have higher premiums than those currently available in the private health insurance market. Higher premiums than currently available.

The medical liability reform Republicans are offering will reduce health care costs for Americans by \$54 billion over 10 years by reducing junk lawsuits. This, again, according to the CBO. What's more, the Republican alternative will reduce the deficit by \$68 billion without increasing taxes by one red cent. We have a clear choice—\$700 billion in new taxes, 118 new bureaucracies and higher health care costs or the Republican bill which will take meaningful steps toward the true health care reform that we know we need.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. AUSTRIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, this week marks a defining moment for this Congress and our Nation. With an \$11.9 trillion debt that continues to grow as government encroaches into every aspect of our lives, we're being asked to vote on a 1,990-page health care reform bill that has a nearly \$1 trillion price tag, adding to the government's long-term deficit problem which will be passed on to our children and grandchildren.

It includes a government option in which bureaucrats in Washington will decide what health care Americans may receive. It would increase the